DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 570 CE 052 103

AUTHOR Cavazos, Lauro F.
TITLE Hearing on H.R. 7, a Bill To Extend the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. Statement of Lauro F. Cavazos, Secretary of Education, before the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, House Committee on Education and Labor.
INSTITUTION Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 21 Mar 89
NOTE 8p.
PUB TYPE Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Accountability; Economic Development; *Educational Legislation; *Equal Education; *Federal Government; Federal Legislation; *Government Role; Hearings; Program Improvement; Secondary Education; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Carl D Perkins Vocational Education Act 1984; *Reauthorization Legislation

ABSTRACT

The Department of Education considers the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act reauthorization one of the critical education issues facing the 101st Congress. This area is of the highest priority because of the importance of vocational education to the rejuvenation of U.S. education; to the educational aspirations of the poor, disabled, and other at-risk populations; and to the future competitiveness of U.S. industry. The Department proposes to maintain both of the historical components of the federal role in vocational education--educational equity and program improvement--and to make improvements in the act that will make it more likely for these important federal objectives to be achieved. These themes are means of achieving this goal: accountability for results, program simplification and enhanced flexibility, program improvement, and vocational education for economic development. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED304570

MAJORITY MEMBERS:
AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS, CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN
WILLIAM D. FORD, MICHIGAN
GEORGE MILLER, CALIFORNIA
DALE E. KILDEE, MICHIGAN
PAT WILLIAMS, MONTANA
MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, CALIFORNIA
CARL C. PERKINS, KENTUCKY
CHARLES A. HAYES, ILLINOIS
THOMAS C. SAWYER, OHIO
MAJOR R. OWENS, NEW YORK
DONALD M. PAYNE, NEW JERSEY
RITA M. LOWEY, NEW YORK
BLENN POSHARD, ILLINOIS
JOLENE UNSOELD, WASHINGTON
NICK J. RAHALL II, WEST VIRGINIA
(202) 225-4393

MINORITY MEMBERS:
WILLIAM F. GOODLING, PENNSYLVANIA
MARGE ROUKEMA, NEW JERSEY
E. THOMAS COLEMAN, MISSOURI

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
B-346C RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

HEARING ON H.R. 7, A BILL TO EXTEND THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT

Witness List
for
March 21, 1989

Honorable Lauro F. Cavazos
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
Accompanied by: Charles Kolb
Under Secretary for Planning, Budget and Evaluation
and
Bonnie Guiton
Assistant Secretary for Vocational Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED352103

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Statement of

Lauro F. Cavazos, Secretary of Education

Before the

Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education

House Committee on Education and Labor

March 21, 1989

Secretary Cavazos is accompanied by

Bonnie F. Guiton

Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education

and

Charles E.M. Kolb

Deputy Under Secretary for Planning, Budget and Evaluation

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Statement of

Lauro F. Cavazos, Secretary of Education

Before the

Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education

House Committee on Education and Labor

March 21, 1989

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to testify on the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. With me today are Bonnie Guiton, the Department's Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education, and Charles Kolb, our Deputy Under Secretary for Planning, Budget and Evaluation.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter. The Perkins Act reauthorization is one of the critical education issues facing the 101st Congress, and the Department has a major interest in being a part of this process. We consider this an area of the highest priority because of the importance of vocational education to the rejuvenation of American education, to the educational aspirations of the poor, the disabled, and other "at-risk" populations, and to the future competitiveness of American industry. On a personal note, let me add that I am a strong supporter of vocational education programs and believe we should do all we can to assist them.

Early last summer, the Department began a laborious effort to review the Perkins Act and to determine what changes should be made through the reauthorization. We have consulted widely, soliciting advice from every Member of Congress and from the public, through a notice in the Federal Register. We have met with representatives of virtually every national association with an interest in vocational education. Because the Perkins Act and the Job Training Partnership Act are complementary vehicles for improving workforce preparation, we have also had frequent communication with the Department of Labor during the development of our proposals. And we have conducted a careful review of operations under the current Act and of the findings of the major studies and evaluations, including the interim reports of the National Assessment of Vocational Education. Our objective in all of this process has been to make the Federal statute the best possible mechanism for ensuring educational excellence and equal opportunity in vocational education.

We are now in the final stages of drafting our bill. I anticipate sending this proposal to the Congress within the next few weeks, after review within the Administration is completed. But I can share with you the major themes and policies that will be enunciated in our proposal, and hope that you will give our ideas serious consideration when the Subcommittee begins to craft its own bill.

Federal support for vocational education, as it has evolved over the decades, focuses on two objectives, educational equity and program improvement. In the area of educational equity, the Perkins Act encourages broader opportunities for the handicapped, the disadvantaged, the limited

English proficient, women, and other groups with special needs. Funds for program improvement make it possible for States to develop programs in areas of emerging labor market demand and to keep their programs technologically current. For the reauthorization, the Department proposes to maintain both of these components of the Federal role, while making improvements in the Act that will make it more likely for these important Federal objectives to be achieved. The following themes are means of achieving this goal.

Our first major theme is accountability for results. We believe that States should hold local programs accountable for program quality and student achievement. Toward this end, our bill would require States to develop performance standards related to students' improvement in basic skills, students' success in the labor market, and any other areas the States determine are appropriate and to apply these standards in making decisions about which programs to fund. This requirement would be a major improvement over current law, which requires States to develop measures of program effectiveness, but gives very little guidance on the kinds of measures States should develop or how these measures should be used.

A second major theme of our reauthorization bill will be program simplification and enhanced flexibility. In our discussions with program administrators at all levels, we have learned of their frustration with the multiple funding set-asides, "hold-harmless" requirements, and categorical authorizations in the current Act. We believe that these constraints impede the ability of State and local administrators to fashion and support activities responsive to State and local needs. Quite simply, the mix of activities needing Federal support in one location will not always be the same as the activities appropriate for support in other communities.

We will propose elimination of most of the funding set-asides and separate categorical authorities of current law, including, after much thought, the individual set-asides for "special needs" populations under Title II-A, the vocational education opportunities program. Our bill will retain the requirement that 57 percent of Basic Grant funds be allocated to programs and activities for these special populations. However, in place of the individual set-asides within the 57 percent total, we propose that each State, in its State plan, thoroughly assess the needs of each of the special population groups, determine the extent to which each group should be served with either Federal or non-Federal funds, or a combination of the two, and ensure that funds are targeted according to the relative severity of needs. We believe that the needs of the special populations are more likely to be met through a thorough and open planning process than through the operation of rigid and inflexible set-asides.

Under the theme of program improvement, our bill would consolidate the 26 activities currently authorized under Title II-B, the vocational education improvement authority, into three broad activities--(1) professional development of teachers, counselors, and administrators; (2) acquisition of instructional equipment and materials needed for program improvement or expansion; and (3) curriculum development, dissemination, and pilot-testing--all activities more closely linked to improvement of programs. This change should ensure that Federal funds are used, as intended, for improvement, expansion, and program innovation rather than maintenance of on-going vocational programs. Further, our bill would replace the current Title IV, National Programs, which is a complex and often conflicting mix of mandated and other activities, with a simpler authority for research, demonstrations, data systems, a simplified Bilingual Vocational Training

program, and new activities in the area of educational personnel development. This change will ensure that National Programs funds can be directed annually at emerging needs and priorities; the structure of the current Title IV is clearly inadequate for that purpose.

The final theme that I will discuss today is vocational education for economic development. Because it provides the job skills needed by students seeking to enter the labor market and by workers at all stages of their careers, vocational education is particularly suited, among programs in the Department, to aiding economic growth and providing trained workers to fill the jobs of the future. Our bill will include new provisions to ensure that Perkins Act funds are directly linked to local and State economic development. We propose requiring States to put into place a process to ensure that any funds expended by local recipients for occupationally specific training will be used only to train students for occupations in which job openings are not only projected but are not likely to be filled without the establishment or continuation of public vocational education programs. This new requirement would ensure that Perkins Act funds are not used for outmoded or duplicative programs. We will propose shifting from the State legislature to the Governor the authority to review the State plans to ensure that vocational education programs are coordinated with the overall economic, educational, and job training strategy of the State. Finally, we will propose a number of changes to ensure that vocational education programs are operated in close coordination with activities funded under the Job Training Partnership Act.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. My colleagues and I will now be happy to take your questions.